(a) whether it is a fact that two US companies have sued the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC) on fraud charges; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) and (b) In November 1986, MMTC received summons alongwith a copy of the complaint from US District Court, Houston U.S.A. claiming about US $ 60 million alleging breach of a contract. The case was filed by M|s. Woodstock Energy Inc. with whom MMTC had never exchanged any correspondence. The MMTC, after consulting Attorney General and Solicitor General of India, has filed a written statement, refuting the allegations of the plaintiff.

Correspondence by GNLF with Government on Letter-Heads with the inscription of Gorkhaland

2174. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN:
SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE:
SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in its recent correspondence with the Union Home Ministry, the GNLF has used letter-heads bearing the heading Gorkha National Liberation Front, State Units, Darjeeling, Gorkhaland, Bharat; and

(b) if so, what is Central Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government of India have made it abundantly clear to Shri Subash Ghising, President of the GNLF that the demand for creation of a separate State of Gorkhaland is unacceptable hence stands rejected.

Area under Forests

2175. SHRI M. A. BABY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the area of forest land remaining in each State and Union Territory and the percentage thereof in relation to non-forest land; and

(b) the minimum percentage of forest land required for maintaining ecological balance in Indian condition according to experts and the deficiency in this regard in each State and Union territory?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) and (b). The National Forest Policy 1952, envisages that the country as a whole, should aim at maintaining one third of its total land area under forests.

Though an extent of about 75 million hectares is legally called forests only about 36 million hectares has good tree cover. On this basis the deficiency for the whole of country is 73 million hectares. State-wise extents are given in the attached statement.